

## **Adverse Weather Early Release Authorized by Governor McCrory**

On the afternoon of Monday, February 16, and Wednesday, February 18, Governor McCrory authorized the suspension of all non-mandatory State Government operations in Wake County. Supervisors were instructed to schedule a staggered early release of affected employees. The Governor also authorized agency heads and the UNC System Office of the President to make individual determinations on early suspension of non-mandatory operations for impacted areas outside of Wake County. In addition, the Governor approved an exception to the provisions for “accounting for time not worked” by allowing affected employees to use Other Management Approved Leave (OMAL) for the remainder of the business day for both early release days.

### **Employee Frequently Asked Questions**

***DISCLAIMER:** The following FAQs only apply to the adverse weather events occurring for period of Monday, February 16 through Wednesday, February 18.*

#### **Q. What is a staggered early release?**

*A staggered early release allows supervisors a period of time to notify and release affected employees to ensure the smooth transition of suspended operations and ensure the safe flow of traffic in heavily populated areas.*

#### **Q. What were the designated times for the staggered early release?**

*On Monday, February 16, supervisors were instructed to begin suspending non-mandatory operations at 2:00 p.m. with a goal of completing the notification no later than 3:00 p.m.*

*On Wednesday, February 18, supervisors were instructed to begin suspending non-mandatory operations at 3:00 p.m. with a goal of completing the notification no later than 4:00 p.m.*

#### **Q. I was approved to work from home on Wednesday, February 18, so how does the early release impact me?**

*The early release only applied to non-mandatory employees who reported to work on February 18 and who needed to travel back home or to a safe location as a result of the “black ice” travel advisories; therefore, employees who were approved to work from home would have been expected to complete their work schedule as assigned for the day. This also applied to employees who were working from home on the February 16<sup>th</sup> early release day.*

**Q. I left at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, February 16, for a dental appointment, so do I use approved leave from 1:00 until 2:00 and then use OMAL from 2:00 until 5:00?**

*No. Employees on pre-approved leave are not eligible to use OMAL due to early release. Only non-mandatory workers who were still working at the work site during the notification of early release are eligible for the exception to use OMAL to account for lost time from work; therefore, you should use the appropriate pre-approved leave from 1:00 until 5:00.*

**Q. My child's school closed at 11:30 on Monday, February 16, due to the winter storm forecast so I had to leave the office around 11:00 a.m.? How do I account for my time not worked on Monday?**

*If no severe weather warnings were in effect at your worksite or any of the geographic areas within your commute to and from your worksite when you left the office at 11:00, then you were considered to be on pre-approved leave for childcare reasons and would need to account for your absence as pre-approved by your supervisor. You would not be eligible for OMAL for early release.*

**Q. I work in the western part of the State and the adverse weather began in my area earlier than the 2:00 suspension of operations notice on Monday, February 16. My supervisor approved for me to leave work early when the adverse weather warnings went into effect in my area but before the authorized 2:00 suspension of operations notice. How should I account for my time not worked?**

*If severe weather warnings were in effect at your worksite or any of the geographic areas within your commute to and from your worksite when your supervisor released you from work, then you would be covered under the adverse weather policy and would be eligible to account for your missed time from work under the regular adverse weather policy (i.e., use of compensatory time or if no compensatory time then use of vacation leave, bonus leave or leave without pay or request approval to make-up the time) up until non-mandatory operations were suspended at 2:00. You would then be eligible to use OMAL from 2:00 until the end of your scheduled business day.*

**Q. On Wednesday, February 18, I reported to work two hours late due to icy road conditions and "black ice" advisories. My supervisor allowed me to make up 30 minutes for my late arrival by shortening my regular one hour lunch to 30 minutes. I was then released from work at 4:00 (one hour early) due to suspension of operations. How do I account for my lost time for work?**

*You would be eligible to account for your missed time from work under the regular adverse weather policy (i.e., use of compensatory time or if no compensatory time then use of vacation leave, bonus leave or leave without pay or request approval to make-up the time) for the two hours you missed for your late arrival. Since you made up 30 minutes of time by shortening your lunch hour, you only need to account for 1.5 hours through use of compensatory time, vacation leave or bonus leave or request approval to*

*make up the time. You would then be eligible to use OMAL for leaving one hour early due to early release.*

**Q. The winter storm warning expired around 10:00 a.m. in my area on Wednesday, February 18, and then the Governor authorized early release and an exception to use OMAL from 3:00 until the end of business on Wednesday afternoon. I did not report to work at all due to adverse weather, so how should I account for my time not worked?**

*Even though the storm warning ended in your area at 10:00, Governor McCrory approved the use of adverse weather for the entire day on Wednesday, February 18 for all areas that were under the winter storm warning for Wednesday morning. Since you did not report to work on Wednesday, you will not be eligible to use OMAL for the Wednesday afternoon early release, but you will be eligible to account for your missed time from work under the regular adverse weather policy (i.e., use of compensatory time or if no compensatory time then use of vacation leave, bonus leave or leave without pay or request approval to make-up the time) for the entire work day on Wednesday.*

**Q. I'm a mandatory employee who was not eligible for early release on Monday or Wednesday. Am I eligible for "emergency time off (ETO)" since I was required to continue to work?**

*No. The early release was not a result of an "emergency closing" but instead was a suspension of non-mandatory operations due to hazardous travel conditions that falls under the adverse weather policy and applied to non-mandatory employees only. Employees that were required to work past the commencement of the suspension of non-mandatory operations will receive their regular compensation for time worked and are not eligible for ETO.*

**Q. I'm a non-mandatory employee who continued to work past the early release notification for suspension of non-mandatory operations. Will I receive additional compensation for working during the period of time that non-mandatory operations were suspended?**

*You are not eligible for additional compensation if you worked during the period of time that non-mandatory operations were suspended. You will receive your regular compensation for the hours worked, which is the same compensation received by mandatory employees who were required to work.*

**Q. I'm a temporary employee who was released from work due to the suspension of non-mandatory operations. Am I eligible to use OMAL for time not worked due to the suspension?**

*No. Temporary employees are not eligible for paid leave benefits and would, therefore, only be eligible for compensation for actual hours worked.*

**Q. Can OMAL be used to account for lost time from work on Tuesday, February 17, due to adverse weather conditions?**

*No. The exception to use OMAL for early release on Monday, February 16, expired at the end of your scheduled business day on February 16. You should follow the regular adverse weather policy (i.e., use of compensatory time or if no compensatory time then use of vacation leave, bonus leave or leave without pay or request approval to make-up the time) to account for lost time from work on Tuesday.*

**Q. I work outside of Wake County, but I never received notification of a suspension of non-mandatory operations and early release on Monday or Wednesday.**

Governor McCrory's suspension of non-mandatory operations only applied to operations in Wake County. The Governor authorized agency heads and the UNC System Office of the President, to determine if non-mandatory operations outside of Wake County would be suspended under the special early release for Monday and Wednesday. It is possible that early release was not authorized by your agency head for your county. Please contact your agency HR Office for specific information about non-mandatory operations outside of Wake County.